STATEMENT BY MINISTER
Amarnath Yatra

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRl INDRAJIT GUPTA): Madam Deputy Chairman,

Hon'ble Prime Minister has already apprised the Lok Sabha yesterday of the background of this year's Amarnath Yatra and the salient features of the logistic arrangements made to cater to an unprecedented number of prospective yatris, as also the relief and rescue operations carried out by the State authorities, with assistance of the Army and Para-Military Forces, in the wake of the tragic calamity that befell the yatra. The untimely snow at higher reaches along the yatra route had exposed the yatris to extreme cold, which combined with the exhaustion of high altitude trekking, caused serious health hazards among the aged and the not so healthy yatris. Torrential and incessant rains in the State resulted in unprecedented land slides at several places between Jammu and Banihal on the National Highway and the yatra route from Anantnag to Pahalgam at two places. This had resulted in complete snapping of the only communication link between Jammu and Pahalgam.

Continuous inclement weather between 22nd and 24th August had prevented any air borne rescue operations for providing succour to the stranded pilgrims or for casualty evacuation from any of the stations along the yatra route. However, the army and security forces helped in a big way on 24th itself in bringing down a very large number of pilgrims from the camps at higher reaches, to Pahalgam. Lt. Gen. Saklani rushed to Pahalgam on 24th. Air rescue operations could commence only on 25th, by which time the heavy death toll of 121 yatris had already occurred. On opening of the weather those who were found ailing and sick were evacuated to Srinagar with the utmost urgency. About 150 sick yatris were provided medical treatment in the Army Base Hospital at Srinagar. 88 of them were admitted to the Hospital for intensive care.

Yesterday, I visited Kashmir to have a first hand account of the relief and rescue operations being carried out by the authorities. I also reviewed the over-all arrangements made for the yatris at important locations along the yatra route. During this trip, I visited Panjtarni, the highest camp close to the Cave Shrine, Pahalgam and Khanabal. At the time of my visit, there were approximately 100 yatris at Panjtarni, 500 at Sheshnag, 6700 at Chandanwari, 70,000 at Pahalgam and 6000 at Anantnag. I talked to a large number of yatris stranded at Panjtarni and Khanabal. Arrangements for the yatris at Pahalgam, Chandanwari and Khanabal were especially reviewed as these three places together were catering to over 80,000 yatris. I also visited the Army Base Hospital to see the evacuated yatris who were hospitalised for treatment.

The yatris were generally very appreciative of the cooperation extended by the yatra authorities and the security forces. They had very few complaints about the adequacy of relief or the timeliness of rescue operations which they thought were done to the best of their ability. Arrangements made for food items at different sites came in for special appreciation. No one complained of shortage of food anywhere along the yatra route. Yatris at Panjtarni, however, felt that blankets remained in short supply. The administration did provide for tents and blankets on a scale four times as large as last year; the arrangements for blankets made by the Administration were only supplemental in nature, and would have sufficed, had the pilgrims carried their own blankets as they had been advised. However, as things turned out, these supplemental arrangements also proved to be inadequate due to the unusually harsh weather conditions, and the freezing temperatures due to unexpected snowfall.

At Pahalgam, one yatri complained of attempts by private shopkeepers to over-charge for food items in their restaurants and tuck shops. Hon'ble Members will appreciate that whenever there is a situation of excessive demand there is a tendency on the part of suppliers to over-charge. Although the State authorities were seized of the matter, the local administration at Pahalgam was instructed to strictly enforce regulation of prices for food items. At Pahalgam while there is adequate quantity of Rice, Wheat and Atta, local officials mentioned that they were running short of edible oil and pulses (dal). Instructions were issued on the spot to rush these items from Anantnag the communication link between

which and Pahalgam had already been re. established.

When I visited Panjtarni there were about 100 yatris still stranded there. Over a dozen yatris had been identified for evacuation as they were not in a position to walk the distance from Panjtarni to Pahalgam. By the time I returned to Delhi, I was informed that these persons had already been evacuated in helicopters. There were about 2,000 yatris who were rescued from the Cave to Baltal. All these yatris have safely reached Srinagar where a camp has been established for lodging. There were 6 sick persons at Pahalgam needing hospitalisation. They have been evacuated to Srinagar and hospitalised. The Indian Airlines is arranging a shuttle flight today from Srinagar to Jammu, and another flight from Srinagar to Delhi, to clear the pilgrims at Srinagar.

The road link between Pahalgam and Anantnag has already been re-established. Between Anantnag and Udhampur, the National Highway was blocked at half a dozen places. I was informed that the road upto Samrohli, 80 kms from Jammu, had been rendered traffic-worthy by 26th August. The communication link between Samrohli and Jammu was expected to be thrown open for traffic by noon today. In view of this 6,000 yatris were allowed to move from Anantnag to Ramban and Samrohli. A similar number of yatris were allowed to move from pahalgam to Anantnag where arrangement for their over-night stay has been made at a safe place. After the national highway is thrown open for traffic today, the batchwise movement of yatris to Jammu will commence from pahalgam and Chandanwadi as per the travel plan already worked out by the yatra authorities.

The Holy Mace of Lord Shiva (Chhari Mubarak) was airlifted to Panjtarni yesterday. In the normal course the Chhari Mubarak would have been taken by road from Srinagar to Pahalgam via Anantnag and Mattan. However, the Srinagar-Anantnag road is till inundated necessitating airlifting of the Holy Chhari Mubarak to Panjtarni so that it reaches the Cave early in the morning of 28th August, that is, the last day on which the final *pooja* can be performed.

Out of the 70,000 yatris camping at Pahalgam, I was told that about 15,000 had not been able to move up to the cave for Darshan. However, in view of the fact that they would not be able to get to the Cave by 28th August, they have reportedly expressed their willingess to return. Instructions were, however, issued to make arrangements for their movement to the Cave should any of them desire to reach the Cave by 28th after taking care to see that the risk is minimal.

I also discussed the plan of the State authorities to deal with the mortal remains of the deceased. The number of the dead has now gone upto 127 but the authorities had by then been able to identify only 77 bodies. In 19 cases, where the relatives had consented, cremation has already been done. The local authorities were preparing coffins for those in whose cases the relatives have expressed the desire to take the human remains home. As for the unidentified bodies, photographs have been taken by the authorities. If no relatives turn up for identification in a day or two there will be no option but to perform the last rites in Pahalgam or Chandanwari itself. These bodies are already beginning to decompose unfortunately.

Some Hon'ble Members had asked yesterday why advance warning was not given when there were signs of deteriorating weather, had also asked the State authorities what precautions had been taken in view of the inclement weather. I Was told by the Adviser to the Governor that on 22nd August itself, when the weather suddenly turned hostile, instructions were issued to the Yatra Officer not to allow yatris to proceed ahead from the established camps without clearance. While this instruction was enforced at the various camps, by then thousands of yatris had already left the respective camps and were in between two camps, and many of those who were at the higher altitudes had already suffered severe exposure. Although, in retrospect, one would wish that more advanced meteorological information should have been sought and acted upon, the State authorities seem to have done their best in minimising the damage under the given circumstances.

Although some minor lacunae in the arrangements could be seen here and there in the context of the large number of yatris this year, the arrangements made for the yatra by and large were satisfactory and could have been adequate had the weather not been unusually harsh. The State authorities, with excellent cooperation from the Para-Military Forces and the Army, have left no stone unturned in handling this tragic event.

Madam, there are one or two other pieces of information which were obtained by us later during the course of the day.

I would like to share those with the House.

The first is that at Pahalgam, edible oil and dal, which were reported to be somewhat in short supply, have already been sent there this morning from Anantnag.

Secondly, the National Highway between Anantnag and Jamu has been thrown open for traffic at 3 p.m. today. About 2,000 Yatris will come to Jammu by this evening. There are no Yatris at Panjtami and Sheshnag. All of them have been evacuated or they have come down to Pahalgam. The Director of Tourism of the J & K State Government who is an IAS Officer, has been made in charge of the Pahalgam camp in order to oversee all the arrangements there.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY (Pondocherry): Madam, it is a national tragedy. According to our reports, more than 160 people have lost their lives. The hon Minister has chosen to give the account of people dead as 127.

Madam, the hon. Home Minister gave an elaborate account of all the arrangements they made and after that to rescue the pilgrims, but I would like to know what the arrangements are that the Government have made. I would like to submit that there has been a total failure of the State Administration there. But, unfortuntely, the hon. Home Minister gave a clean chit to the State Administration and said that the arrangements were perfectly all right.

From the Statement of the hon. Home Minister, it appears that a clear warning system has been developed in this country as far as the weather condition is concerned. The Meteorological Department is giving the weather warning 48 hours in advance. I would like to reiterate 48 hours in advance. And the hon. Home Minister in his statement has stated that on 22nd August, the Advisor to the Governor had informed him that the inclement weather had started on 22nd and that the information was passed on to the camps, and before it could reach them, the pilgrims had started moving. Madam, what was the Administration doing there 48 hours before, for the purpose of giving the clear warning to the pilgrims, who had been in Pahalgam and also in the Sheshnag area before reaching Panjtarni? The hon. Minister's statement itself shows that the information came on 22nd. At that time the climate had started deteriorating. I want the hon. Minister to clarify when the State Administration got the report from the Meteorological Department about the inclement weather. The reports say that 160 people died in several camps at Panjtarni, Sheshnag and at other places and the hon. Home Minister says 127 people died. I would like to know which version is correct. I would also like to know whether the State Government was able to identify those people's bodies or not.

There is a major complaint from the Yatris, who have returned, that there were inadequate tents in the camps to house the pilgrims who were there. There was a warning given by the State authorities saying that if they were pushed out of the camp, they should inform them. They said that the entire tents which had been put up there were jampacked. Why was such as situation there? Why did the State Administration give such a warning, "If you are pushed out of the camp, inform us"? That means the people, who were there in the camps, were jampacked. Sufficient tents were not there for housing them at the camps. Therefore, I want to know from the hon. Minister whether the tents were sufficient for housing the pilgrims at the temporary camps at Panjtarni, Sheshnag and at other places. The hon. Minister to clarify this point to the august House.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Narayanasamy, there are many names. If you seek clarifications, it would be better. I know that it is a national calamity for everybody.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Madam, I agree. The entire House is agitated over this matter.

I charge the hon. Home Minister that he is fully responsible for this apart from the State administration. From the 22nd August onwards, people started dying. Neither the State Government nor the Central Government responded to their calls. The hon. Home Minister could visit the place only on the 26th August. For four days what were the Central Government and the State Government doing? The hon. Home Minister has to clarify this point because it is a very serious lapse on the part of the State Government and on the part of the Central Government. They took pilgrims for a ride. Pilgrims died in a peculiar circumstances because the State administration had not taken care of them. The Central Government was also sleeping over the matter. Therefore, I would like to know from the hon. Home Minister: Why did the officials of the Home Ministry not visit that place? Why was the supervisory work not conducted? Why did your officials not go over there? Why did the Home Minister go there only on the 26th and not earlier? The hon. Home Minister has to respond to all these questions because serious doubts are there in the minds of the people of this country that this Government has totally ignored pilgrims who have gone there and the State administration has not taken care of them. People died like not potatoes. They have not been taken care of by the Govemment.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: People died like not potatoes there?

SHRl V. NARAYANASAMY: People died like animals. This was the situation. Therefore, I squarely blame the hon. Home Minister for this serious lapse. The hon. Home Minister has to definitely answer all these questions in the House.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let me call the other person. There is a procedure in this House: when we seek clarifications, we don't make speeches. Unfortunately, you are making a speech. You just put a question because I have got 14 names before me.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Madam, I am putting the last question. The hon. Home Minister says in the last para of his statement that there was a minor lacunae. What is that minor lacunae? In fact, there was a major lapse on the part of the Government. Why did he say that there was a minor lacunae? Therefore, this shows that he has not taken the matter very seriously. Don't play with the Lives of the people. The hon. Home Minister is answerable to the people of this country for the death of 160 pilgrims who have gone to Anantnag for pilgrimage.

श्री अजीत जोगी (मध्य प्रदेश): महोदया, मैं केवल कुछ विशिष्ट प्रश्न पूछना चाहता हूं। गृहमंत्री जी ने अपने ब्यान में जो बातें कही हैं, उससे संबंधित दो-तीन प्रश्न ही केवल पूछना चाहूंगा। इस ब्यान में कहीं भी राज्य के गवर्नर और मुख्य सचिव की भूमिका का उल्लेख नहीं है। हमारी जानकारी के अनुसार जब यह दुर्घटना प्रारंभ हुई 22 को, तब से लगातार राज्य के गवर्नर दिल्ली में थे और राज्य के मुख्य सचिव यहां योजना मंडल की मीटिंग के बहाने दिल्ली में थे। समाचार पत्रों ने तो यहां तक छापा कि गवर्नर यहां प्रधानमंत्री जी के डिनर इन्वीटेशन के लिए संपर्कीक ठहरे हुए थे। यदि यह सब बातें सही हैं तो क्या राज्य के मुख्य सचिव जो योजना मंडल की चर्चा के लिए यहां आए हुए थे इतनी बड़ी हृदय-विदारक घटना होने की खबर पाने के बाद भी यहां दूसरे अधिकारियों को योजना मंडल से चर्चा के लिए छोड़कर वापस नहीं जा सकते थे? उनकी भूमिका के विषय में गृहमंत्री जी का और शासन का क्या कहना है, यह जरूर उल्लेख करें।

महोदया, 22 तारीख को यह दुर्घटना हुई, सबको पता चलने लगा, यहां तक कि हम लोगों को अपने क्षेत्रों से बहुत से लोगों के फोन आने लगे। लोग जानकारी लेना चाहते थे कि उनके गांवों से, उनके शहरों से जो लोग गए हैं उनका क्या हुआ? इसी तरह से सरकार के पास भी सूचना आ रही थी। तो हम 4 दिनों तक गृह मंत्री जी की क्या विवशता थी, क्या लाचारी थी कि वह घटनास्थल पर नहीं जा सके? उनके जाने के बाद त्वरित कार्यवाही हुई। वह अगर पहले चले जाते तो जो ये 160 लोगों की जानें गई हैं, ये शायद न जातीं और शायद दुर्घटना के आकार और आयाम को कम किया जा सकता था। इसलिए मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि गवर्नर, मुख्य-सचिव और गृह मंत्री जी की क्या विवशता थी, वे क्यों समय पर वहां नहीं जा सके?

महोदया, इस दुर्घटना के बाद जो राहत देने का काम सेना ने किया है, वह सराहनीय है। जो यात्री लौटकर आ रहे हैं, उनसे हमें जो सूचना मिल रही है, आम तौर पर लोग राहत के काम से संतुष्ट हैं। हमारी सेना के बारे में यह ख्याति है कि वह बड़ी दक्ष सेना है, सेना जब भी किसी

काम को अपने हाथ में लेती है तो बहुत अच्छे ढंग से उसे करती है। ऐसा कहा जा रहा है कि सेना की मदद लेने में जिला प्रशासन और राज्य प्रशासन ने काफी विलंब किया। जब दुर्घटना हुई थी और लोग मर रहे थे तब भी सेना की मदद नहीं ली गई। कानूनन सेना तभी काम करना प्रारंभ करती है जब जिला प्रशासन का प्रमुख, जिला मजिस्ट्रेट सेना को रिक्विजिशन भेजता है। तो मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि विभिन्न जिलों के कलक्टर्स ने सेना की मदद कब मांगी।

महोदया, इस दुर्घटना से जो सबसे बड़ी बात उभरकर सामने आई है वह यह है कि कोई पूर्वानुमान या ऐडवांस प्लानिंग नहीं थी। इस साल विभिन्न कारणों से अमरनाथ यात्रा पर जाने वाले यात्रियों की संख्या में बहुत बड़ा विस्तार हुआ। मैं उत्तर प्रदेश के कुछ गांवों में गया था। वहां लोग यह बता रहे थे कि पिछले साल तक जहां केवल 2-4 यात्री अमरनाथ यात्रा पर जाते थे, इसके मुकाबले में इस साल 40-50 यात्री गए हैं। इसके पीछे भी कोई कारण होगा कि इतने ज्यादा यात्री क्यों गए। जब यह पता चल रहा था कि इस साल इतने ज्यादा यात्री जा रहे हैं तो पूरी प्लानिंग उस तरह से क्यों नहीं की गई? अगर इस बारे में पूर्वानुमान कर लिया जाता कि इस साल पिछले साल की अपेक्षा 10 गुना ज्यादा यात्री जाने वाले हैं तो उसके लिए आवश्यक व्यवस्था की जा सकती थी।

महोदया, मैं माननीय प्रधानमंत्री जी से और गृह मंत्री जी से यह गुजारिश करना चाहूंगा कि यह घटना अपनी तरह की पहली घटना नहीं है। हरिद्वार में यही हुआ, उज्जैन में यही हुआ। जहां भी धार्मिक श्रद्धालु जा रहे हैं, बड़ी संख्या में जा रहे हैं वहां प्रशासन का फैल्योर और प्रशासन की असफलता की घटनाओं की पुनरावृत्ति हो रही है। यह दुर्घटना अपने आप में बहुत बड़ी दुर्घटना है जिसमें 160 श्रद्धालुओं की जानें गई हैं। गृह मंत्री जी वहां होकर आए हैं, यह पर्याप्त नहीं है मैं यह चाहूंगा कि इस घटना की उच्च-स्तरीय जांच होनी चाहिए। केवल प्रशासनिक जांच से काम नहीं चलेगा, न्यायिक जांच से काम नहीं चलेगा क्योंकि प्रशासनिक और न्यायिक जांच से हम गवर्नर की भूमिका, चीफ-सेक्रेटरी की भूमिका और गृह-मंत्रालय की भूमिका तय नहीं कर पाएंगे। इसलिये मेरी मांग है कि इस पूरी घटना की समग्र रूप से जांच के लिए एक ज्वाइंट पार्लियामेंटरी कमेटी गठित की जाए जिसमें दोनों सदनों के सदस्य हों ताकि भविष्य में ऐसी घटनाओं की पुनरावृत्ति न हो।

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Fernandes. Is there anything left?

SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES (Goa): Yes, Madam. I have some important suggestions for the hon. Minister.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please do not repeat what has been said already.

SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES: Madam, it is a most tragic incident that the country has ever witnessed and I do not think that if we blame anybody, these people can be brought to life. What we can do is we can avoid such incidents or such tragedies in future. I do not think that the meteorological departments are up to the mark. You go to a Western country, you go to the US; they will forecast the weather for the next five days and they will tell you precisely at what time it will rain. Madam, we have the same technology. There was an incident in Goa. We had a severe storm, and the people were warned on the BBC that there would be storm at such and such time, but the local Meteorological Department stationed at Panjim could not do anything because they were caught napping. I think the same is the case here also. So, I do not know whether we have upgraded them, especially when there are such festivals; whether there are any stations set up on the route to advise the pilgrims. Madam, I think that there was a lapse on the part of the administration because they had the warning, but the communication problem was there. By the time the communication went, the people had already left. I do not know what system of communication they were adopting; whether they were using the radio or whether they were studying the birds. I do not know what the message system that they adopted was. We have an RAF system, the Rapid Action Force, which we have done to respond at a Zero Hour. This is used only in case there is a law and order problem. We also have a Fire Brigade in this country. The Fire Brigade does not act only when there is a fire, but it also acts when there are natural calamities or tragedies. I want to know from the hon. Minister whether the RAF is under his Ministry; whether this Force, this elite Force, is being trained to also handle such tragedies; if not, whether this Force will be trained to respond to such tragedies in future.

Madam, the Minister has mentioned at page 5: "Out of 127, 19 bodies have already been cremated; 77 are being identified. So, only

31 bodies remain to be identified." And he has also mentioned that they have been photographed. But what is the system for identifying such bodies? Have they flashed their photographs on Doordarshan? Their relatives are away on the main land. They are living in the main part of the country. I do not think that I have seen anything on Doordarshan. So, how do they expect their relatives or the people to identify these bodies? Why are these bodies being kept at Pahalgam? Why are they not shifted to Delhi or even to Srinagar or to other places where there are facilities to store these bodies? I do not know whether any arrangement has been made by the Government for speedy disposal of these bodies.

Madam, the Minister has also mentioned that the shuttle system has been introduced by the Indian Airlines. I do not know whether these people will be charged; whether they will be freely airlifed. I do not know what facility is made. If the Government responds to all these queries, I would be highly obliged. Thank you, Madam.

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI (Kerala): Madam, I want to make only one point. Madam, if one goes through para 2 and para 12, which is the last para, it is very clear that there is a failure on the part of the administration. I do not repeat what they have said. First of all.the Government must inquire into why the Meteorological Department failed in informing them in advance. That is number one. According to his statement, it was only on 22nd that the information was passed on to the people. It means that they had failed in sending advance information because on 22nd the rain started. From para 2 and the last para—that is para 11, it is very clear that either the Meteorological Department has failed in sending advance information or there is a failure on the part of the administration itself. Anyhow, it was only from 22nd onwards, after the tragedy had started occurring, after the weather had become dangerous, that the administration started acting. But they could not do anything till 24th. That is number two. Will you inquire .into the failure of the Meteorological Department and initiate proceedings against them? That is number three. This is a century-old pilgrim yatra. What are the proposals made? Are you making any arrangements to prevent such tragedies in future? It is necessary to make some kind of arrangements.

Lastly, Mr. Jogi has made a very important point. This time a large number of pilgrims, an unprecedented number of pilgrims, all of a sudden went to the Kashmir Valley or to Amarnath. Definitely I appreciate the whole worship and everything.

6.00 P.M.

At the same time, there is something fishy somewhere. Will you please try to find out how these things happened all of a sudden, whether any particular organisation has given any kind of encouragement because of the present political climate or atmosphere there? That is a matter to be probed.

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI: Why?

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: I am not saying that they are responsible. I am only saying that this is matter to be looked into.

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI (Uttar Pradesh): Madam Deputy Chairperson, I have two comments to make in the first instance. In the statement of the hon. Home Minister, for whom I have great personal regard, words like "unprecedented number of prospective yatris" and "continuous inclement weather" have been used. The whole tragedy has been attributed to the inclement weather and unprecedented number of yatris. Apart from that, as was pointed out, there were some minor lacunae. This is a calculated exercise, this is an alibi to exonerate the administration, which has totally collapsed, at all levels.

Secondly, I would like to express my appreciation of the commendable work which has been done by the Army authorities and other security forces. This has been well attested by the returning pilgrims.

Madam Deputy Chairperson, I have a few clarifications to seek. The first one is this. Why has this word "unprecedented" been used? This year the practice of registering the pilgrims had been resorted to and Rs. 50 were collected from each of them and you knew the number before the pilgrimage started. Secondly, I would like to know whether it is a fact that—he talked about Chandanwari, Panchtarni and so on; there

is a six-kilometre stretch of land between Panchtarni and the Holy Cave—most of the casualties took place in that particular area. What were the arrangements made knowing fully well that it was a very narrow way? The width of the way is hardly two-and-a-half feet. Every year new bridges have to be built over the rivulets and the contracts for building the bridges are given in a casual way to the contractors. This goes to show the callousness, the continuing callousness and casualness, of the administration. Did the hon. Home Minister try to look into this aspect? I have not visited that place either in any official capacity or on my own personal capacity. But I have been told about it by a large number of knowledgeable people. Did he try to verify this particular fact? The next thing which I would like to know from the hon. Home Minister is this. A yatri complained about private shop-keepers. I am rather pained to see that Mr. Gupta tries to belittle it. I did not expect it from the Home Minister, a man who stood for the rights of the people and who fought for them. He belittled it by saying that during shortages it is a tendency to overcharge and so on. When Nehru asked the people whether the black-marketeers should be hanged on the next lamp-post, I think, persons like Mr. Gupta. ...*(Interruptions)*... If you interrupt, Mr. Gupta, I am prepared to exchange views no holds barred. I have personal respect for you. But if you interrupt and if you make any comments casually, covert or overt, while I too seeking clarifications, I will try to satisfy you by my overt comments. I have held you in high regard over the years because you belong to such a good family. Mr. Gupta's elder brother upheld the dignity of justice at a time when it was very difficult to do so, the way he stood up to *Suhrawardy* as an Additional Presidency Magistrate or, maybe, as a little higher authority. I know his personal sacrifices and his personal qualities and that is why I am little bit pained that he should react like this when a simple clarification has been sought.

I am sorry. This is not my fault if more time has been taken like this.

THE DEPUTY CHIRMAN: Then whose fault is it? Nobody has interrupted you.

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI. Madam, for such a tragic situation, it is a tragic response. I don't want to say it is a casual response. The Prime Minister has assured us that this House is also taken as seriawly as the other House is taken. The hon. Home Minister has been a Member for umpteen number of years. I am a novice.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I did not hear the Home Minister saying anything to you.

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI: Madam, I face you and also the Home Minister...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is the whole trouble. You should not face them. You should face me only.

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI: Madam, your enchanting face always disciplines me. But there are mikes in front of hon. Ministers. When they even whisper, that also goes on echoing in this House. Madam, you know it very well, if I may be permitted to say so.

My point is, there was shortage of basic facilities. It is mentioned in the statement that only one yatri complained. But a number of newspapers have reported that it was a shame on the part of the administration because in a tragic situation like this many people took advantage of it. If it has happened, I expected from a person like him to admit it. He should have said, "Yes, it has happened. Thereafter, we will take care of it." In any case, whether it is a fact or not, and whether all the newspapers are based or not, Mr. Ibrahim has to bring some Bill to throttle them, though it is denied by the Prime Minister because shortly he will have to have a Minister for denials.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Chaturvedi, you are going out of the point. The point here is, the whole country and this house are very much concerned about the tragedy which has affected the people who have gone for yatra. The Home Minister went there. Whatever he saw there, he has told you. Perhaps one person complained to him. Maybe one person or maybe 20 persons might have made
a complaint.... *(Interruptions)*.... Just a
minute.
Out of 70,000 persons ... *(Interruptions)*. Nearly 1,00,000 or 70,000 people were there. The Home Minister cannot ask each and every person because he has to report it back to the House. There was paucity of time. He has given in gist that this is what has happened. One person made a complaint. He is accepting it. He is not denying it. What are you saying?

SHRITRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI. All I am saying is, para 4 is an under-statement. It is a deliberate under-statement by the administration to underplay the wrong doings that happened in that place. That is all I want to submit.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He will answer it.

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI: What were the arrangements made at such places earlier? The unprecedented number was known to them and the requirements were also known to them. I would like to know what kind of medical facilities and other auxiliary facilities were provided at the three camping sites. Many pilgrims who have returned have complained of shortage of medical facilities. Madam, I am looking at you. I see the Prime Minister denying it. But it does not matter. He is entitled to deny it. My point is, that is what people have complained. I will be very happy if that is not so. I would like to know from the Home Minister whether he will increase the compensation amount from Rs. 50,000 to at least Rs. 2.5 lakhs or so, as has been demanded by all sections of the House earlier.

I would just like to say one more thing. I do
not want to put many questions because I do not want many of my questions to be left unanswered as in the case of Mr. Narayanasamy..... *(Interruptions)*....

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN. I think nobody has answered any question. Please put your question quickly so that there is enough time for the Home Minister to answer. Already, you have taken so much time.... *(Interruptions)*....

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI. In the statement you have said, "However, the army and security forces helped in a big way." On page three, you have said, "Although the State authorities were seized of the matter, the local administration at Pahalgam was instructed..."I do not known what this language indicates. Please read it. Shall I explain what its implications are? In para five the sentence begins with 'although'. Please read it. I leave it to you, Madam Deputy Chairperson, to explain to me the implications. Similarly, in para two, you have said, "However, the army and security forces helped in a big way on 24th iteself." When did the tragedy start? It did not start suddenly on the 24th. The pilgrimage had also started much earlier. From 22nd to 24th, what were the State authorities doing? It is not for me to answer. I have got the papers, but 1 cannot show you because Madam, you have asked it not to do so. The Prime Minister will also say that many people use words which have to be expunged later.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I think you are going beside the point. We are no discussing the Prime Minister. We an discussing the Amarnath Yatra. We are going to find out what the Prime Minister has to say So, do not waste the time of the House. You have not put any question to which the Prime Minister could reply.

SHRITRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI. On every point, I have put a question. I just wan to know why it took so long for the State authorities to start the relief operation. Why did it take them so long? Thank you.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I have got 10 names.

SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPP/ (Karnataka): Why don't you guillotine?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I don't know whom to guillotine because my interest is it getting the answer and not the question.

SHRl SATISH AGARWAL: I have two, thre questions.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: There are many names before you.

I have Mr. Suresh Pachouri. I do not know if he is left with anything to ask. Please do not mention anything about the language. W should understand what the subject is about.

श्री सुरेश पचौरी (मध्य प्रदेश): महोदया, मैं उन सब बातों की पुनरावृत्ति नहीं करूंगा, जो मेरे से पूर्व वक्ता बोल चुके हैं। मैं आपके माध्यम से गृह मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहूंगा कि 22 तारीख से 26 तारीख तक कितने हवाई जहाज के लिए रिक्वीजिशन डिफेन्स फोर्सेस से गृह मंत्रालय ने किये हैं और यह रिक्वीजिशन कब मांगा गया है? क्योंकि 22 तारीख से ही मौसम की खराबी की सूचना हमको मिलने लगी थी जैसा कि माननीय गृह मंत्री जी ने अपने बयान में उल्लेख किया है। यदि 22 तारीख को रिक्वीजिशन किया गया है तो 22 तारीख से 24 तारीख तक इन्तजार क्यों किया गया? यह मैं आपके माध्यम से जानना चाहूंगा। गृह मंत्री जी ने यह कहा है कि हवाई जहाज के माध्यम से जो बचाव कार्य प्रारम्भ हुआ वह 25 तारीख से हुआ। इसका मतलब यह हुआ है कि हवाई जहाज का रिक्वीजिशन 25 तारीख तक मांगा नहीं गया। इसकी देरी के क्या कारण रहे हैं?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is written in the second paragraph. Please read it You must read the statement and then put the question.

श्री सुरेश पचौरी: मैडम, मैंने वही पढ़ा है और मैंने वही क्वेश्चन किया है। 25 तारीख को हवाई जहाज के माध्यम से बचाव कार्य प्रारम्भ हुआ है। जबकि 22 तारीख को मौसम विभाग से यह सूचना मिली थी कि मौसम खराब है तो 25 तारीख से बचाव कार्य क्यों प्रारम्भ किया गया ?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The weather was bad Mr. Suresh Pachouri, I am trying to contain the discussion. As a Presiding Officer, it is my duty to see that if the discussion is going In the wrong direction, it is put on a proper track. The first statement of the second paragraph says that continuous inclement weather between 22nd and 24th August had prevented any air borne rescue operations. So, even if there were requisitions, they could not do anything. Please read that and then put your question because other wise.it will be wasting the time of the House and of the Members as well. Put proper questions and t will permit you.

श्री सुरेश पचौरी। मैडम मैं इस विवाद में नहीं जाना चाहता। जहां तक मृतकों की संख्या का जिक्र है उनमें से 77 की शिनाख्त की जा चुकी है। क्या इन शिनाख्त किये गये मृतकों के परिवारजनों को सूचना दी जा चुकी है? वहां पर जो पुलिस नियंत्रण कक्ष काम कर रहे हैं, उन पुलिस नियंत्रण कक्षों की जो व्यवस्था थी, जिसका डेस्लीख कल हमने किया था, उनकी क्या कोई वृद्धि की गई है? यह मैं जानना चाहूंगा। अमरनाथ में श्रद्धा भाव से हर वर्ष लोग दर्शन करने जाते हैं। ऐसी अनहोनी घटना आगे न होने पाये इसको दृष्टि में रखते हुए क्या सरकार कोई ऐसी व्यवस्था करना चाहती है जिससे कि यदि कोई ऐसी बात हो जाये तो उसका इमीडिएटली निदान निकाला जा सके?

मैं अंतिम प्रश्न पूछना चाहूंगा कि नागरिक आपूर्ति विभाग का भी इससे संबंध है क्योंक खाद्य सामग्री की सुविधा प्रदान करनी होती है। स्वास्थ्य सुविधाएं प्रदान करने की बात है और डिफेन्स से संबंधित बात भी इसमें आई है। क्या संबंधित विभागों के मंत्रियों, सचिवों ने इस क्षेत्र का दौरा किया है, क्या मंत्री जी इस संबंध में प्रकाश डालेंगे?

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA (West Bengal): Madam, firstly, I would like to know whether arrangements have been made to pass on inforamation about the dead and the injured to the relatives of the persons concerned so that they can perform the last rituals or otherwise can take any other decision so far as their dead relatives are concerned. I feel that no proper arrangements has been made so far to pass on the information to the Stae capital and other places. This is of the highest priority perhaps, of course, after the rescue operations had been taken up. The second point which I would like to make is that this is not the first time that such a thing has happened. People who come to such pilgrimages are getting into major kinds of accidents involving a large number of them. I would also like to know whether the Government has taken into account the fact that those who come for such pilgrimages are mostly people from the plains, from villages. They are very simple people, people who have not gone to places outside their villages. They are travelling long distances and they are experiencing a terrain to which they are not used and they are experiencing a system of society and life with which they are not familiar. So, they are getting into all kinds of difficulties. Some of them are physically not capable of making such long journeys but because of religious reasons they feel like going over there. Going on such a tour is something they would want to do at least once in their life time, in this kind of a situation, how are you going to help these people? There has to be an information-system for ensuring that such people, before they proceed, know something about the destinations, about the risks involved and so on. Amarnath yatra is a dangerous thing. It is a risky journey. It is not a simple journey. When they come, they must be prepared for the risks. They must know what risk to take and what not to take. They must know to carry things like woollen garments, blankets, and so on. They may not be knowing all these things. All this information has to be passed on to them as a matter of principle. What I feel is that there should be a committee of experts to go through the kind of experience which people had encountered and it should work out some remedial measures so that, in future, such things

do not happen so regularly. The third point which I would like to make is this. Obviously, you cannot fight the weather. But you must find out how much of the tragedy is due to human factors and how much of it is due to weather.

To what extent the fact that we had been more concerned about the security aspect of the pilgrimage, because of the threats from militants, that, in a sense, minimised the importance given to the welfare aspect. Between the security aspect and the welfare aspect, a balance had to be struck.

I would like to know whether the balance was properly looked into or not. Certainly, even in the best of arrangements things can go wrong. Otherwise there would have been no deaths from cold in Switzerland. Every year there are many deaths from cold in Switzerland, even in the other most developed countries in the world. So it is not simply a question of infrastructure, meteorology and all that. Even with all this, things can go wrong. So it is not that for everything which has happened the Govemment has to be blamed. That is not the way to look into it. It is a tragedy. It is a big tragedy. One must assess the tragedy with all its aspects. It is not simply a political issue. Lastly, I would say that apart from that, even in the plains, for example, Kumbh mela, so many millions of people participate in the Kumbh mela. What is the system for drainage? I know something about it because in our State we have the Sagar mela where a large number of people come within a very short period. Now, what is the system of drainage, sanitation, maintenance, accommodation and inoculation Infrastructure in most cases appears to be inadequate. So there has to be a national policy with respect to those congregations where a huge number of people gather for a short period and there has be some preparation for this at the national level to handle this situation. Thank you.

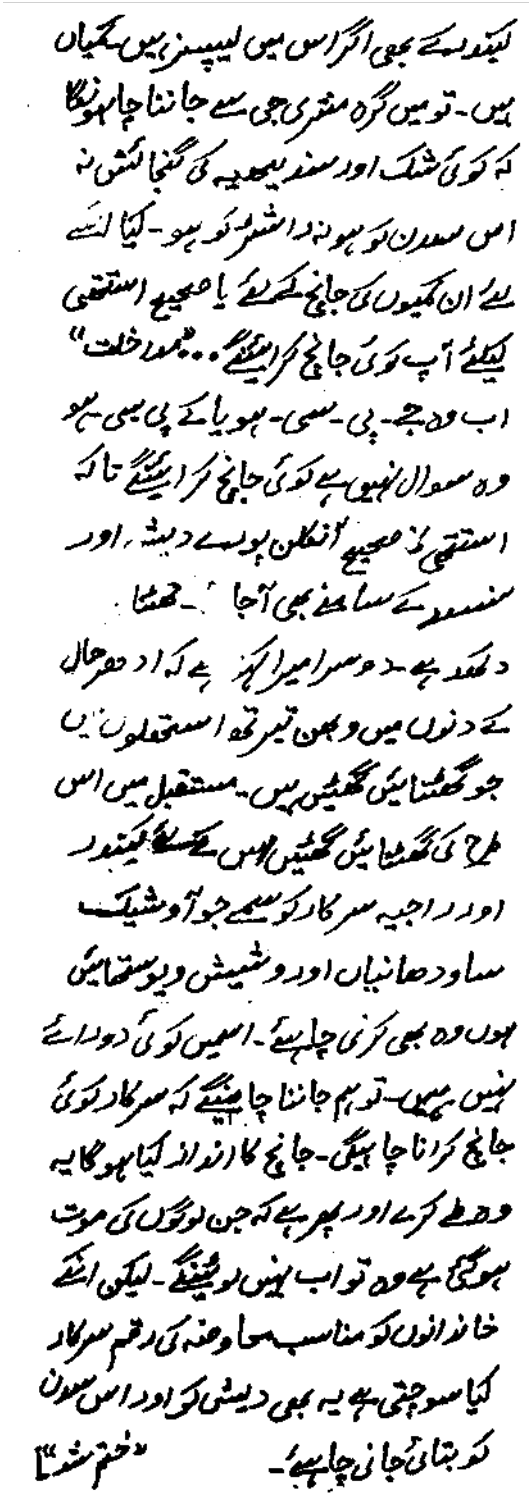
श्री मूल चन्द मीणा (राजस्थान): उपसभापति, महोदया, करीब करीब इस स्टेटमेंट को पढ़ने के बाद ऐसा लगता है कि अमरनाथ की दुखद घटना हो गई और मरने वाले मर गए। गृह मंत्री जी के वक्तव्य को पढ़ने के बाद ऐसा लगता है कि राज्य का प्रशासन और केन्द्रीय प्रशासन बहुत ही जागरूक था और यह घटना आकस्मिक रूप से मौसम खराब होने के कारण हुई। इस वक्तव्य के पैरा 4 में गृह मंत्री जी ने कहा है कि हमने पिछले साल के बजाय इस साल चार गुना ज्यादा तंबुओं और कंबलों की व्यवस्था की थी। मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि पिछले साल कितने तंबुओं और कंबलों की व्यवस्था की गई थी और इस साल कितने तंबुओं और कम्बलों की व्यवस्था की गई थी? साथ ही जब आपने चार गुना व्यवस्था की तो इसी के अनुसार आपने दवाओं और डाक्टरों की भी व्यवस्था की होगी? तो आपने जगह जगह कितने डाक्टरों की क्लीनिकों को स्थापित किया और कितनी दवाओं का इंतजाम किया? मैडम, मैं यह भी जानना चाहूंगा कि 127 व्यक्तियों के मरने की बात कही गई है। लेकिन 160 लोगों की मृत्यु हुई है। तो क्या इन व्यक्तियों की मृत्यु दवा न मिलने के कारण हुई, उनका इलाज समय पर न होने के कारण हुई है? मैं यह भी जानना चाहूंगा कि आपकी जो यातायात व्यवस्था है, आपने कहा है कि वहां से यात्रियों को लाने के लिए आपने स्पेशल ट्रेने लगाई हैं। मैडम, वहां से आने वाले यात्रियो ने, जिनके साथ वहां यह घटना हुई है, जो इस घटना से गुजरे हैं, जैसी स्थिति उन्होंने ग्रहण की है, तो जब वह अपनी दर्दनाक घटना सुनाते हैं तो ऐसा लगता है कि वहां प्रशासन की ओर से कोई व्यवस्था नहीं थी। उन्हें कितना दुख झेलना पड़ा और किस प्रकार की लूटपाट उनके साथ हुई। वहां पर सारा सामान महंगा हो गया। वहां पर कोई प्रशासन का आदमी देखने वाला नहीं था। गृह मंत्री जी ने अपने वक्तव्य में कहा है कि वहां स्थानीय प्रशासन ने निगरानी रखी। उसके बाद भी महंगी चीजें बिकीं। मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि जब प्रशासन था तो महंगी वस्तुएं यात्रियों को क्यों उपलब्ध हुई?

मैडम, यह तीर्थ स्थान एक ऐसे स्थान पर है जहां पिछले समय में भी कई दुर्घटनायें घटित हुई। उन घटनाओं को रोकने के लिए आपने जो चार गुना व्यवस्था की थी तो उसमें आपने कौन कौन सी नई बातें की थी, कौन कौन सी नई व्यवस्थायें आपने तीर्थ यात्रियों के लिए की थी? जब आपका यह अनुमान था कि इस साल चार गुना अधिक लोग जा सकते हैं तो आपको चार गुना व्यवस्था करनी चाहिए थी। जब यह पहले से अनुमान था आपको कि चार गुना लोग ज्यादा जा सकते हैं तो चार गुनी ज्यादा व्यवस्था कर सकते थे। मैडम, मौसम की खराबी के बारे में सब सूचना, सारी बातें कई माननीय सदस्यों ने पूछ ली। सूचना समय पर नहीं पहुंचने के कारण घटनाएं हुई। लेकिन जो राहत कार्य और बचाव कार्य हैं इनमें देरी का क्या करण रहा, देर से क्यों राहत कार्य प्रारंभ किए गए? क्या प्रशासन में कहीं एकरूपता नहीं थी या प्रशासन जागरूक नहीं था। इसके पीछे कौन कौन दोषी थे? ये राहत कार्य

शीघ्र प्रारंभ क्यों नहीं किए गए? उन अधिकारियों के खिलाफ सरकार ने अब तक कोई कार्यवाही की है या कोई विचार है? यही मैं जानना चाहता हूं।

श्री जलालुद्दीन अंसारी (बिहार): मैडम, यह बहुत ही दुखद घटना है और कल ही हम लोग इस घटना के प्रति अपनी भावनाएं व्यक्त कर चुके हैं। गृह मंत्री जी ने वहां घटना को देखने के बाद जो बयान दिया है वह हम लोगों के सामने है। मेरा एक सुझाव होगा कि यह घटना बहुत ही दुखद और संवेदनशील है। पूरा सदन और पूरा देश दुखी और चिंतित है। लेकिन इस घटना में राजनीति करने की जरूरत नहीं है। हमको लगता है कि प्रश्न सही हैं, बहुत सारे प्रश्न सही हैं जहां पर प्रशासन और राज्य सरकार या केन्द्र सरकार विफल है तो उसकी जांच होनी चाहिए। सही स्थिति का पता चलना चाहिए। लेकिन जम्मू कश्मीर और उत्तर प्रदेश में चुनाव हैं इसलिए इस दुखद घटना में राजनीतिक लाभ उठाने की कोशिश नहीं होनी चाहिए। मेरा यह भी निवेदन है...(**व्यवधान**)...कुछ आवाजें ऐसी आ रही हैं तो लग रहा है कि इसमें पोलिटिक्स को मिक्स अप किया जा रहा है, राजनीति के साथ घालमेल इस घटना का किया जा रहा है ...(**व्यवधान**)...मेरा निवेदन होगा आप तमाम साथियों से कि इस दुखद घटना से पूरी हमदर्दी हमारी आपकी और सबकी है। राज्य प्रशासन और वहां के स्थानीय प्रशासन और केन्द्र के भी अगर इसमें लैप्सेज हैं, कमियां हैं तो मैं गृह मंत्री जी से जानना चाहूंगा कि कोई शक और संदेह की गुंजाइश न इस सदन को हो न राष्ट्र को हो क्या इसके लिए इन कमियों की जांच के लिए या सही स्थिति के लिए आप कोई जांच कराएंगे?...(**व्यवधान**) अब वह जे०पी०सी० हो या के०पी०सी० हो। वह सवाल नहीं है। कोई जांच कराएंगे ताकि स्थिति का सही आंकलन पूरे देश और संसद के सामने भी आ जाए। घटना बहुत दुखद है। दूसरा मेरा कहना है कि इधर हाल के दिनों में विभिन्न तीर्थ स्थलों में जो घटनाएं घटी हैं, भविष्य में इस तरह की घटनाएं न घटें इसके लिए केन्द्र और राज्य सरकार को उस समय जो आवश्यक सावधानियां और विशेष व्यवस्थाएं हों वे भी करनी चाहिए। इसमें कहीं कोई दो राय नहीं है। तो हम जानना चाहेंगे कि सरकार कोई जांच कराना चाहेगी? जांच का स्वरूप क्या होगा यह वह तय करे और फिर हम लोगों को बताए। फिर है कि जिन लोगों की मृत्यु हो गयी है वे तो अब नहीं लौटेंगे। लेकिन उनके परिवारों को उचित मुआवजे की राशि सरकार क्या सोचती है यह भी देश को और इस सदन को बतायी जानी चाहिए।

H شری جلال الدین انصاری "بہار" میڈم یہ بہت ہی دکھد گھٹنا ہے اور کل ہی ہم لوگ اس گھٹنا کے پرتی اپنی بھاونائیں ویکت کر چکے ہیں۔ گرہ منتری جی نے وہاں گھٹنا کو دیکھنے کے بعد جو بیان دیا ہے۔ وہ ہم لوگوں کے سامنے ہے۔ میرا ایک سجھاؤ ہوگا کہ یہ گھٹنا بہت ہی دکھد اور سنویدنشیل ہے۔ پورا سدن اور پورا دیش دکھی اور چنتت ہے۔ لیکن اس گھٹنا میں راجنیتی کرنے کی ضرورت نہیں ہے۔ ہم کو لگتا ہے کہ پرشن صحیح ہے۔ بہت سارے پرشن صحیح ہیں۔ جہاں پر پرشاسن اور راجیہ سرکار اور کیندر سرکار وپھل ہے تو اسکی جانچ ہونی چاہیے۔ صحیح استھتی کا پتہ چلنا چاہیے۔ لیکن جموں و کشمیر اور اتر پردیش میں چناؤ ہے۔ اس لیے اس دکھد گھٹنا میں راجنیتک لابھ اٹھانے کی کوشش نہیں ہونی چاہیے۔ میرا یہ بھی نویدن ہے کہ "مداخلت" کچھ آوازیں ایسی آ رہی ہیں تو لگ رہا ہے کہ اس میں پولیٹکس کو ملکس اپ کیا جا رہا ہے۔ راجنیتی کے ساتھ گھال میل اس گھٹنا کا کیا جا رہا ہے۔۔۔ "مداخلت"۔۔۔ میرا نویدن ہوگا آپ تمام ساتھیوں سے کہ اس دکھد گھٹنا سے پوری ہمدردی ہماری آپکی اور سب کی ہے۔ راجیہ پرشاسن اور وہاں کے استھانیہ پرشاسن اور کیندر اور



SHRI SATISH AGARWAL (Rajasthan): Madam Deputy Chairman, I do not want to load the hon. Minister with more questions. In addition to what has already been asked by my colleagues, I want to ask two specific questions.

You have stated in para 11 of your statement, "I was told by the Adviser to the Governor that on 22nd August itself, when the weather suddenly turned hostile, instructions were issued to the Yatra Officer not to allow yatris to proceed ahead from established camps without clearance". I want to know, at that point of time where this Yatra Officer was posted? Was he posted in Srinagar, Pahalgam, Panchtarni, Anantnag or elsewhere? Then, were there Yatra Officers all over this particular area so that you could communicate with all of them not to permit anybody to proceed further? What infrastructural facilities were availale with the Yatra Officer who was either in Srinagar or Anantnag or Pahalgam? I don't know where he was. Was he all alone to regulate this yatra or there were many other Yatra Officers posted all along the route, connected with wireless sets so that this information, not to permit anybody to proceed further, could be communicated? Had that been carried out and had the instructions been given on the 22nd, the 23rd or the 24th, this tragedy, which took place on the 25th, would not have taken place because the tragedy took place between 22nd and 24th.

Secondly, when did the Home Ministry get the information from the State Government regarding the situation in that particular area? Is it on the 22nd, the 23rd or the 24th? Then, what measures were taken by the Union Home Ministry or the Govemment of India to instruct the Governor of the State, who was here in Delhi up to the 24th night? He left for Srinagar only on Sunday, the 25th morning waiting only to have dinner with the Prime Minister, which also was not pre-arranged. What message was conveyed to the Home Ministry? Did the Home Ministry ask the Governor and the Chief Secretary to immediately go back to Srinagar

before the 25th? If not, why not? If yes, when? If that had been done, then your rescue operation would have started, because the tragedy had already taken place, before the 25th. 121 people were already dead. Yatras are nothing new in this country. We have got Khwaja's Dargah Sharief in Ajmer. Lakhs of people visit that place. We have got Kumbhas in Prayag, Allahabad and Haridwar. Such nice arrangements are made by the State Government for tents and everything! This tragedy took place in Ujjain. This tragedy took place in Haridwar. And again this tragedy! Some explanation is needed on this account from you.

श्री सच्चिदानन्द (कर्णाटक): उपसभापति महोदया, आप के आप के माध्यम से मुझे सिर्फ दो-तीन चीजों पर गृह मंत्री जी से क्लैरीफिकेशन पूछना है।

जिन लोगों की इस दुर्घटना में मृत्यु हो गयी, उन की तो मृत्यु हो गयी, अब मृतकों की पहचान के बारे में जो व्यवस्था फोटो लेने मात्र से की गयी है, वह व्यवस्था पूरी तरह से नहीं हो पायी है, ऐसा मेरा विचार है। इस में आप भारतवर्ष के कोने-कोने से आए हुए लोगों के चित्र उन के परिवार वालों को कैसे पहुंचाएंगे? उस के लिए आप ने क्या कार्यक्रम बनाया है? इस बारे में मुझे एक क्लैरीफिकेशन चाहिए।

दूसरे, हमारे यहां एक प्रख्यात कवि कुवैम्पु हुए है। उन के दामाद इस यात्रा पर गए हुए थे, ऐसी मेरी जानकारी में है। उन का नाम डा० सुरेन्द्रा है। सात दिन पहले मुझे यह खबर मिली थी कि वह भी इस यात्रा में गए हुए है। उस के बाद अभी तक उन की कोई सूचना नहीं मिली है कि वह जीवित हैं और वापिस आए है। तो कहां पर है? इस के लिए गृह मंत्री जी कोई व्यवस्था करेंगे कि वह सुरक्षित है या नहीं हैं और किस अवस्था में हैं?

तीसरा मेरा क्लैरीफिकेशन यह है कि जो अस्वस्थ लोग हॉस्पीटल में हैं, उनकी किस प्रकार परिचर्चा हो रही है और उन को उन के घरों तक पहुंचाने की सरकार क्या व्यवस्था करेगी इन तीन बातों पर अगर गृह मंत्री जी क्लैरीफिकेशन दें तो उन की बड़ी कृपा होगी।

उपसभापति: मुझे लगता है कि 11 लोगों के क्लैरीफिकेशंस के बाद अब तो स्टेटमेंट में कुछ रहा नहीं है।

श्री ओ० पी० कोहली (दिल्ली): महोदया, मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय गृहमंत्री जी से इन प्रश्नों का उत्तर चाहता हूं। क्या सरकार ने यात्रियों की संख्या का आंकलन लगाने के कुछ प्रयत्न और पहल अपनी ओर से की थी या नहीं? यदि सरकार ने ऐसा कोई प्रयास किया था यात्रियों की संख्या का आंकलन लगाने के लिए, तो उस अनुपात से व्यवस्था करने, सफाई की व्यवस्था करने, रसद-सामग्री की व्यवस्था करने, यातायात की व्यवस्था करने, डाक्टरों की व्यवस्था करने, दवा की व्यवस्था करने, कंबलों की व्यवस्था करने यानि ऐसी व्यवस्थाएं सरकार की ओर से की गई थीं या नहीं की गई थीं?

महोदया, दूसरा मेरा प्रश्न यह है कि मौसम की खराबी की पूर्व सूचना प्राप्त करने में सरकार विफल क्यों रही? और, उसे यात्रियों तक प्रेषित करने, कम्युनिकेट करने में सरकार क्यों विफल रही?

महोदया, तीसरा मेरी जानकारी का बिन्दु यह है कि अभी तक लोग मारे मारे फिर रहे हैं। अपने संबंधियों के विषय में जानकारी प्राप्त करने के लिए कि वह जिन्दा हैं या मर गए हैं, कहां फंसे हैं? सरकार ने इन्फोरमेशन देने का, सूचना देने का कोई एफेक्टिव तंत्र, कोई प्रभावशाली तंत्र इस दौरान में स्थापित किया है या नहीं? और, अब भी कोई ऐसा तंत्र स्थापित किया गया है या नहीं? क्योंकि अब भी ढेर सारे लोग अपने संबंधियों के बारे में सूचना प्राप्त करने के लिए मारे मारे फिरे रहे है। लगता है कि कोई एक प्रभावशाली सूचना कक्ष, सूचनातंत्र, सूचना देने का सिस्टम स्थापित करने में सरकार बुरी तरह से विफल रही है। ऐसा कौनसा तंत्र सरकार ने स्थापित किया है? यह मैं जानना चाहता हूं।

महोदया, गवर्नर और मुख्य सचिव की भूमिका के विषय में यहां प्रश्न किया गया है। ऐसी बड़ी त्रासदी वहां घटित हो रही थी और गवर्नर दिल्ली में बैठे हों। यह तो अपने आप में बहुत दुखद स्थिति है। इस पर में कोई प्रश्न नहीं करना चाहता, केवल टिप्पणी करना चाहता था।

महोदया, एक बात सारे स्टेटमेंट से स्पष्ट नहीं होती कि 22 तारीख से 24 तारीख के बीच में नागरिक प्रशासन क्या कर रहा था? मौसम खराब था, यह बात समझ में आती है, लेकिन 22 तारीख से 24 तारीख के बीच नागरिक प्रशासन की तरफ से किसी भी प्रकार का कोई प्रयत्न, कोई प्रयास, कोई सूचना, कोई गतिविधि भी थी, इसका कोई उल्लेख इसमें नहीं है। क्या नागरिक प्रशासन इस बीच में बिल्कुल निष्क्रिय बैठा हुआ था? और, यह सेना को बचाव-कार्य और राहत-कार्य में लगने के निर्देश कब दिए गए? क्या उससे पहले नहीं दिए जा सकते थे? देरी से निर्देश देने का कारण क्या है?

महोदया, मैं यह भी जानना चाहता हूं आपके माध्यम से, कि इतनी बड़ी घटना हो गई, इतनी बड़ी त्रासदी हो गई और गृहमंत्री जी ने इसकी सारी जिम्मेदारी केवल दो बातों पर लाद दी कि यात्रियों की संख्या अभूतपूर्व थी और मौसम खराब था, लेकिन प्रशासन जो असफल हुआ इसको जानबूझकर उन्होंने अनदेखा करने का प्रयत्न किया, उसको ढांपने का प्रयत्न किया। इसलिए मेरा आपसे निवेदन यह है कि जिस त्रासदी में सरकार के मुताबिक 121 या 127 लोग मारे गए हों, क्या वह त्रासदी अपने आप में यह जस्टीफाई नहीं करती कि उसकी एक व्यापक जांच करने के लिए कोई कमेटी गठित की जानी चाहिए, जो समयबद्ध तरीके से दस या पन्द्रह दिन के अंदर अपनी रिपोर्ट दे दे और उस रिपोर्ट में से यह साफ जाहिर हो कि इस त्रासदी के लिए यात्रियों की अभूतपूर्व संख्या जिम्मेदारी थी या खराब मौसम जिम्मेदार था या प्रशासन की असफलता जिम्मेदार थी या किसी प्रकार की प्री-प्लानिंग नहीं थी। यह सारी बातें उभर कर सामने आनी चाहिएं। वह कमेटी जो गठित की जाए, वह यह भी बताए कि भविष्य में इस प्रकार की घटनाओं और त्रासदियों की रोथाम के लिए क्या उपाय किए जा सकते हैं। तो मेरा एक स्पेसिफिक प्रश्न यह है कि क्या इतनी बड़ी त्रासदी को मद्देनजर रखते हुए सरकार किसी प्रकार की जांच कमेटी गठित करने का इरादा रखती है, जो कि इस घटना की कम्प्रेहेन्सिव जांच करके समयबद्ध तरीके से अपनी रिपोर्ट दे?

अन्त में, महोदया, मेरे कई साथियों ने यह जो बात कही है कि कंपनसेशन उचित मात्रा में दिया जाना चाहिए, तो मैं सरकार से जानना चाहूंगा कि क्या सरकार का इरादा मृतकों के परिवारों को एक उचित कम्पनसेशन की राशि देने का है या नहीं? धन्यवाद।

श्री एस॰एस॰ अहलुवालिया (बिहार): उपसभापति महोदया, गृह मंत्रालय को केन्द्र और राज्य के खुफिया विभाग से खबर मिलती है कि कहां कितने लोग किस जगह जमा हो रहे हैं और केन्द्र और राज्य के खुफिया विभाग की जो रिपोर्ट आती है उसको गृह मंत्री और प्रधानमंत्री स्वयं देखते है। मुझे यह समझ में नहीं आ रहा है कि क्यों नहीं गृह मंत्रालय को और प्रधानमंत्री कार्यालय को इस बात का पता चला कि इस बार इतनी बड़ी तादाद में लोग अमरनाथ यात्रा पर जा रहे है। प्रधानमंत्री कार्यालय जो कश्मीर के मामलों को खुद देख रहा है, उनको इस बारे में पूरी खबर होनी चाहिए थी।

महोदया, जैसा कि मैंने कल भी कहा था, श्रावण का महीना महादेव शिव की पूजा के लिए बहुत महत्वपूर्ण माना जाता है और श्रावण की पूर्णमासी के दिन यह संख्या और बढ़ जाती है। जितना नज़दीक श्रावण की पूर्णमासी आती है, यह संख्या बढ़ती जाती है और 'हर-हर महादेव' का नारा लगाते हुए, 'बोल बम' का नारा लगाते हुए श्रद्धालु लोग उन पहाड़ों की चोटियों पर किस द्रुत गति से चढ़ जाते हैं, यह पता नहीं लगता है। मुझे गृह मंत्री के बयान को देखकर बड़ी निराशा हुई है। इन्होंने इस दुर्घटना के जो कारण बताए है। उनमें एक कारण इन्होंने बताया है कि यात्रियों को कड़ी ठंड का सामना करना पड़ा। अमरनाथ में हर साल ठंड पड़ती है, इस बार कुछ ज्यादा पड़ी है। जो यात्री वहां जाता है वह ठंड का सामना करना जानता है। दूसरा कारण इन्होंने बताया है कि ऊंचे पहाड़ों पर चढ़ने के कारण हुई थकान। जो आदमी अमरनाथ यात्रा पर जा रहा है वह कोई गंगासागर के मेले में या समुन्दर में तो जा नहीं रहा है, उसको पहाड़ चढ़ने पर थकान का सामना तो करना ही पड़ेगा और फिर महादेव साथ हों तो कोई दिक्कत नहीं है। और फिर इन्होंने बताया कि वृद्ध और अशक्त लोगों पर इस मौसम का प्रतिकूल प्रभाव पड़ा। ये सब कारण पहले पैराग्राफ में बताए गए हैं।

महोदया, मुझे दुःख है कि हम इन चीजों पर अड़ गए और हमने इस चीज को मानने से इंकार कर दिया कि गलती हुई है। हमने नजरअंदाज किया है इन चीजों को और नजरअंदाज करने के कारण यह यात्रा आशीर्वाद भरी यात्रा से परिणत हुई अभिशाप भरी यात्रा में और इतने लोगों के प्राण चले गए। शायद कोई मां यह कल्पना करके वहां गई होगी कि महादेव जी की कृपा से उसे एक बेटे का दान मिलेगा और वहां उसे क्या मिला?

महोदया, गृह मंत्री जी ने अपने बयान में बताया है कि जम्मू और पहलगांव के बीच एकमात्र संचार सूत्र नष्ट हो गया था। मैं छोड़ देता हूं क्लाइमेटिक कंडीशन की बारिश हुई, तूफान आया, भूस्खलन हुआ और संपर्क सूत्र टूट गया। लेकिन आपको एक थ्रैट था आतंकवादियों का। आतंकवादी लोग अमरनाथ यात्रा पर जाने वाले श्रद्धालुओं

पर हमला कर सकते थे। तो क्या आप उसी एकमात्र संचार व्यवस्था पर निर्भर थे? अगर ये क्लाइमेटिक कंडीशन न होती और ईश्वर न करे अगर आतंकवादियों का हमला हो जाता, संचार-व्यवस्था फेल हो जाती, वे लाईन काट देते तब आप क्या करते? आपने वहां पर सिक्योरिटी फोर्सेज को, पैरा-मिलिट्री फोर्सेज को लगाया हुआ था। अमरनाथ यात्रा के 7 प्वाइंट हैं और वहां पैरा-मिलिट्री फोर्सेज का पहरा है और उनके पास वायरलैस सैट्स हैं। अगर आतंकवादी हमला कर देते तो एक कैंप से दूसरे कैंप तक आप कैसे संपर्क स्थापित करते? आपने कह दिया कि बारिश हो गई, तूफान आ गया और संपर्क टूट गया और हम बता नहीं सके। फिर 22 अगस्त को जब श्रीनगर से क्लाइमेटिक कंडीशन के बारे में आपको बताया गया और आपने जब कैंप में खबर भेजी तो लोग कैंप से निकल चुके थे।

तो आपने जब कैम्प में खबर भेजी कैम्प से लोग निकल गए थे। निकल गए थे एक कैम्प से दूसरे कैम्प में। या तो आप कहें कि एक कैम्प से दूसरे कैम्प के बीच में कोई पुलिस की व्यवस्था नहीं थी, कोई सुरक्षा की व्यवस्था नहीं थी, या तो यह मानलें या यह मानले कि आपने आतंकवादियों से उनकी सुरक्षा व्यवस्था के लिए कोई भी सैनिक वहां तैनात नहीं किया था और अगर यह नहीं मानते तो यह मानिए कि वहां सुरक्षा व्यवस्था थी हमने उसका उपयोग नहीं किया, हमने उनके वायरलैस का उपयोग नहीं किया, हमने उनको आगाह नहीं किया रास्ते मे कि जो भी यात्री मिले उसको वापिस भेज दें। आपने यह सीधा कह दिया कि साहब, हमने 22 अगस्त को जब क्लाइमेटिक कंडीशन की सूचना पहुंचाई तो उस वक्त तक लोग कैम्प से निकल चुके थे। यह तो बड़ा अजीब बहाना लगाया आपने। यह बहाना तो नहीं चलने वाला।

महोदया, उसके साथ-साथ यह जो 22 अगस्त से 25 अगस्त तक हैलीकोप्टर की बात है, यह हेलीकोप्टर जो वहां चलते हैं वह ऐसे साधारण पवनहंस वाले हेलीकोप्टर नहीं हैं, या आर्मी के हेलीकोप्टर हैं। यह सियाचिन, ग्लेशियर में उतरने वाले हेलीकोप्टर हैं। वहां चाहे कितनी धुंध हो, कितना तूफान हो और सैनिक की एक आवाज जाए कि मुझे रेस्क्यू ऑपरेशन करना है तो हेलीकोप्टर जाता है। यह मिग 17 है। इसलिए हम करोड़ों रुपया देकर उसको खरीदते हैं। यह रिलायंस का या यू॰पी॰ का हेलीकोप्टर नहीं है जो मौसम देखकर चलेगा। यह हेलीकोप्टर हिन्दुस्तान की आर्मी का है और वह सीधा उतरता है चाहे गंभीर से गंभीर अवस्था हो। महोदया, मैंने तो आज पहली बार सुना कि कंटीन्युअस मौसम खराब था और फौज के हेलीकोप्टर भी वहां पर उड़ान नहीं भर सकते थे, यह मानलें। मैं जानता हूं कि हर दो घंटे में मौसम बदलता है और च इंडियन एयरलाइंस, चाहे मोदीलुफत या सहारा एयर लाइ या कोई एयर लाईस उड़ान ले या न ले लेकिन यह हि 17 उड़ान भर सकता है। इसकी रेंज है, इसका अं विजन है।

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Are you talking about Mig-27 or helicopters or are you talking about Jet? My knowledge is very poor in this regard.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: I am not talking about Mig-27.1 am talking about Mig-17 only.

मैं कह रहा हूं कि वह मिग 17 को रिक्वेजिशन करने के लिए आपने रक्षा मंत्रालय से कब गुजारिश की। ... (व्यवधान) गया सिंह जी, इंद्रजीत गुप्त जी बहुत सशक्त है आप घबराएं नहीं। यहां उनको कामरेड की जरूरत नही है, यहां अफसर बैठे हैं जवाब दे देंगे। ...(व्यवधान) तो मेरे कहने का मतलब है कि यह हेलीकोप्टर्स रिक्वेजिशन डिफेंस मिनिस्ट्री से कब किए गए, वह जरा बताने की कृपा करें। महोदया, उसके साथ-साथ मैं जानना चाहूंगा, चलिए गृह मंत्री महोदय दिल्ली में उपस्थित नहीं थे, कहीं दौरे पर थे, पर हमारे एक राज्य मंत्री कश्मीर के ही है जिनको वहां टॉपोग्राफी के बारे में पूरा पता है। उनको ठंड नहीं लगती, मैंने टी.वी. पर देखा कि हमारे राज्य मंत्री जो स्वेटर हाथ में लेकर ही उतर गए, महसूस हुआ तो फिर स्वेटर पहनने लगे। क्योंकि राज्य मंत्री जो हैं वह वहां के रहने वाले हैं, वहां की टॉप्पोग्राफी को समझते हैं, वहां की भाषा समझते हैं। वह कहां थे, उनको क्यों नहीं भेजा गया? डिफेंस मिनिस्टर यहां पर थे। उनको क्यों नहीं भेजा गया? पर वह पैनपुरी पे थे। मेरे कहने का मतलब है कि और बहुत सारे मंत्री हैं। राम विलास पासवान जी पार्टी का टिकट बांटने के लिए वहां जा सकते हैं, कश्मीरी लोगों से बैठकर डिस्कस कर सकते हैं। सी.एम. इब्राहिम जी बैठे हैं, वह जा सकते हैं, शरद यादव जा सकते हैं अगर किसी ने इस चीज को गंभीरता से लिया होता। ...(व्यवधान)

महोदया, आपने कहा कि क्यों गुस्सा आ रहा था अहलुवालिया को। तो कल हमने इस दर्द से इस बात को उठाया था. गुस्सा इसलिए आ रहा था। कोई मर्यादा सदन की मैंने भी नहीं तोड़ी और न तोड़ना चाहता हूं। प्रधान मंत्री जी ने कहा कि कभी मेरा एक्सपंज नहीं हुआ।

मैं इस सदन में 11 साल से हूं। मैं मर्यादा तोड़ता नहीं हूं। जो कुछ सीखा है यहीं से सीखा है और आपके भाईयों से ही सीखा है।

आपके भाईयों से ही सीखा है। तोड़ना भी नहीं चाहता हूं।

महोदया, मैं एक बात और कहना चाहूंगा कि सिक्योरिटी फोर्सेज के सिवाय, वहां की गवर्नमैंट मशीनरी के सिवाय एक प्राइवेट वैंडर जो वहां रेस्टोरेंट चला रहा था और पैसे कमाने की सोच रहा था, उसके बारे में आपने यहां पर लिखा है लेकिन मैंने टी.वी. पर आपके प्रोग्राम में देखा कि आप सिर्फ एक आदमी से मिले। दूसरे से मिलने ही नहीं दिया गया आपको और उसी आदमी ने कंप्लेंट की और दूसरों से मुलाकात कराई ही नहीं गई। वहां पुलिस लोगों को धक्के लगा रही थी। मैं टी.वी. पर दो बजे आपका प्रोग्राम देख कर आ रहा हूं। महोदया, मैं कहना चाहता हूं कि वहां के मुसलमान भाईयों ने इस बार जो कबिले-तारीफ काम करके दिखाया है, उसके बारे में कहीं भी उल्लेख नहीं है। मैं यहां क्वोट करना चाहता हूं।

''मुसलमानों ने फरिश्तों की तरह हिंदू तीर्थ यात्रियों की सहायता की।''

फरिश्तों की तरह। और इसमें कहा गया है-

''ठिठुरते, भीगे और भूखे हजारों हिंदू यात्रियों को जब कोई आसरा न दिखा तो उन्होंने पहलगांव और अनन्तनाग के कश्मीरी मुसलमानों से सहायता की गुहार लगाई। मुसलमानों ने फरिश्तों की तरह दिल खोल कर उनकी सहायता की। अमरनाथ के लिए रवाना हिंदु यात्रियों ने निराश हो कर स्थानीय लोगों से मदद मांगी, उनके पास और कोई चारा नहीं था लेकिन उन्हें तब भारी आश्चर्य हुआ जब स्थानीय लोगों ने, मुसलमानों ने उन्हें भोजन और रहने की सुविधा, यहां तक कि कम्बल दिए। गुजरात के सूरत के निवासी वीरेन्द्र कुमार ने कहा कि हमारे लिए वे मुसलमान फरिश्तों की तरह थे। एक वरिष्ठ पुलिस अधिकारी अशोक कुमार सूरी ने कहा...'' ... (व्यवधान)...

I am straightening the record. What is a clarification and what is not, I know better than you.

एक वरिष्ठ पुलिस अधिकारी अशोक कुमार सूरी ने कहा कि इन क्षेत्रों में करीब 5000 यात्रियों को स्थानीय लोगों ने मदद की।'' एक-दो नहीं महोदया। इसका उल्लेख गृह मंत्री की इस रिपोर्ट में नहीं है। आप जनरल पब्लिक का सपोर्ट लेंगे, उनका उल्लेख नहीं करेंगे तो आपको सपोर्ट देगा कौन? धार्मिक सद्भाव बढ़ाने के लिए इस चीज का उल्लेख करना बहुत जरूरी है।

''वहां स्थानीय लोगों ने उन्हें विश्वास दिलाया कि उन्हें किसी तरह का खतरा नहीं है। अनन्तनाग के कयूम जिलानी का कहना है कि लोगों ने यात्रियों को कहा कि वे सुरक्षित है। कोई आतंकवादी यहा उनका कुछ नहीं बिगाड़ सकता। श्री जिलानी ने कई हिंदू परिवारों को शरण दी। श्री जिलानी ने कहा कि वहां हर घर में यात्रियों को शरण मिली। उन्होंने कहा कि हम लोग उन्हें वर्षा में भीगते और ठिठुरते कैसे देख सकते थे? ऐसा माना जाता है कि जहां-जहां उन्होंने दरवाजा खटखटाया, वहां भोजन और आवास उनके लिए उपस्थित था।''

ऐसी अवस्था में महोदया, गृह मंत्री जी अपनी गुहार कर रहे हैं। वहां जो इतने लोग गए और लोगों को वहां का जन-समर्थन मिला ... गलतियां आपकी हैं, हमारे सवालों के जवाब आप दें और गलतियों को स्वीकार करें और वहां की जो जनरल पब्लिक ने इन तीर्थ यात्रियों को मदद दी है, उसको सराहें और उनको धन्यवाद दें। उनको शाबाश बोलें कि आने वाली पुश्तों में जब अमरनाथ की यात्रा करते हुए कोई भी हिंदु कन्याकुमारी से महादेव का नारा लगाते हुए जाए तो आगे उसे स्वागत करने के लिए कोई नूरानी चेहरा, मुसलमानी चेहरा नज़र आए तभी हम सद्भाव बना सकेंगे। आपके आंकड़े बताते हैं कि इस यात्रा में 127 लोग मरे हैं। पर दो बजे की टी.वी. न्यूज़ में 160 पार कर चुके हैं। तीन बजे की न्यूज़ बता रही है कि सड़क खुल गई है। आपका अपना टी.वी. इब्राहिम साहब यह बता रहा है कि 160 मर गए और आपका स्टेटमेंट कहता है कि 127 मरे हैं। कौन सी बात सच है, वह बता दें। दूरदर्शन सच है या आप सच हैं, यह बता दें और सवालों का जवाब दे दें, धन्यवाद।

DR. (SMT.) BHARATI RAY (West Bengal): Madam Deputy Chairman, I share the national sense of shock and anguish. Much has been said on this subject, I do not want to repeat what has been said.

I rise to make only two points.

The first is: I have personal experience of this route because 1 have been to this Cave. I had gone from Pahalgam, right up to Amarnath. The route to the Cave, as per my personal experience, as per my personal knowledge, is an extremely hazardous one. I came neither from a U.R village, which was referred to by some Hon. Members, nor I was totally uneducated. But we were absolutely astonished at the terrible speed of wind, they call this place, Shesh Nag, 'Do-afzaan'. Because of the speed of the wind. The road is so narrow that if that one group of pilgrims wanted to come back while another was going up there would be a

general stampede. There, on the road between Panchtarni and Amarnath two people cannot go side by side.

The point I want to make in this context is, in our country, many of the temples are built in places which are quite dangerous. One has to take a lot of trouble to reach these temples. The people, the *yatris,* have to be made aware. I remember, there were six of us. We had three blankets each. We were just shivering in the cold. I think there should be a direction of 'do's and dont's'. The pilgrims going to Amarnath should be told: These are the things you must do; these are the things you must not do'. The information has to be disseminated.

I would like to know from the Home Minister whether the Government had any arrangement for making the pilgrims aware of this information, of this sort of knowledge.

The second thing is—I know I would be making myself unpopular by saying this—the number of *yatris* has to be restricted. There is no way in which the Amarnath route can cope with such huge number of people. It means spending a lot of money on widening the roads, etc. We cannot do this. We are not able to do this. Therefore, there should be a system of monitoring so that the number of *yatris* who are going is checked, is monitored, and the number is restricted when it is in excess. There is no other way. Thank you, Madam.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY (Andhra Pradesh): Madam, may I speak from here? I seek your permission.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: So long as you do not cross the floor.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY. There is no danger of that. I am strongly implanted on this side.

SHRI S.S.AHLUWALIA: Renukaji, so long as you do not change the constituency ....*(Interruptions)*....

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: No levity, please.

Madam, I agree with the points made by my hon. colleagues. I do not want to take more time of the House. There are just three points to which I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Home Minister.

One is: what is the compensation that we are going to give to the families of the deceased and the people who had suffered while undertaking this yatra?

The second thing is: is the Government going to take the responsibility of transporting these people back to their home State? This should be done free of cost. Not just to the base camp, but back to their village, to their home.

May I make another suggestion? As was suggested by my hon. colleague here, next time around, we should have a registration camp, like in the case of the Haj Yatra, where everybody should go and register so that, God forbid, for any purpose should we need to communicate, it would be a much more simplified process, a simplified system.

These are the three points on which I wanted to have clarification. Thank you.

SHRI SURINDER KUMAR SINGLA (Punjab): Thank you, Madam. I am extremely grateful to you for accommodating me. Madam, I do not know; India's brilliant Home Minister is making such a clever statement and explaining...

SHRI AJIT P.K. JOGI: Because he is brilliant.

SHRI SURINDER KUMAR SINGLA:, what the State could do. But he did not explain where the State failed—the State Administration as well as the Central Government failed—in coping with the challenge of this national calamity which had occurred.

7.00 P.M.

It is very tragic. Madam, many questions were raised, but I am restricting myself to two or three questions only.

My first query is, when tragedy was occurring, when did the message actually reach the Home Ministry or the hon. Home Minister—on what date and time? Did he ever get in touch with the State Governor at all or not? Even if he was away from Delhi, there was a possibility, even from Calcutta where he was, and did he get in touch with the Governor or did he get in touch with the Prime Minister about what was happening and for deputing people to take care of the situation? So I want

to know really when and at what point of time the Home Ministry came know of the tragedy occurring and at what point of time the Home Ministry acted on that.

The second question I want to put is this. I submitted a proposal to the House yesterday that for these religious festivals, where millions of people gather, some kind of a national fund has to be created so that a permanent machinery is established to take care of these religious festivals. I also suggested that the fund could be around Rs. 200 crores, which could take care of religious festivals of all faiths without any discrimination. Now let the Home Minister apply his mind and let the Government apply its mind, whether such a national policy is needed or not. If it is needed, it has to be backed by funds created at the Central level.

Madam, my third question is this. Amarnath Yatra is a very sacred and revered event. For the last 50 years people having been going there in large numbers. As Mrs. Ray has pointed out, the route is very difficult and the road very narrow. But the point is whether there is a possibility of widening the road and building a road and whether the Government is thinking of building such a road or not because, unless you improve the infrastructure at these religious places for such festivals, future tragedies cannot be avoided.

Lastly, I would say that because such tragedies are occurring every year, the Government has to apply its mind to see that such tragedies do not occur in future. What the State Government and Central Government have to do is to see, if there is a natural calamity, how to deal with it and how to minimize the damage in a natural calamity. Now we have every system to anticipate what kind of natural calamity could be or could not be there and what arrangements should be made or should not be made. In such a situation, 1 would say that there is a need for the formulation of a national policy for religious festivals.

Thank you, Madam.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: Respected Madam Deputy Chiarman, since-you have raised certain points first, I am rising to reply to them. Otherwise I would have asked my Home Minister to reply to all the points raised by the hon. Members of the House.

First of all I would like to express my thanks to the hon. Members who have made certain valuable suggestions for future guidance.

Before this august House was adjourned for the recess, some Members had raised the issue of security aspect. Nobody expected this type of a natural calamity or havoc that was going to take place. Whether Lord Amarnath gave this as a punishment or not, I do not want to comment on this.

Madam, I would like to read my statement because it might not have been circulated earlier. It is my mistake. In para 15 I have made it clear. In the last two or three years, right from the beginning there has been an apprehension of possible threats to the *yatris* from militants. There were reports that because there would be elections there would be likely attempt at planting explosive devices etc. at the traditional camp-sites. Keeping the possibilities and these apprehensions in view, the sites of the camps at Chandanwari and Seshnag were also located soon, before the commencement of the *yatra* to ensure security and tight arrangements. The *yatra* has so far passed off peacefully without any untoward incident. I would like to make this clear to you. You made that observation. So, there is no question of any security deficiency so far as the security arrangement is concerned.

Secondly, the Home Minister, in his statement, has not acknowledged the co-operation given by the local people. This is one of the remarks that your kind self has made. This is because he did not want to repeat the same statement. In my statement it has been amply made clear that all these arrangements were further strengthened by the wholehearted co-operation of the local employees and the participation of all sections of the local population which provided various services for the *yatra,* which was particularly heartening. We have not forgotten the actual co-operation given by the local people. We have acknowledged that in my statement.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: There are two types of local assistance. It appeared in the newspapers yesterday that some people from Karol Bagh and Patel Nagar areas of Delhi were running *langars* there and that they were providing tea and coffee to the *yatris.* I am

talking particularly about the Muslim fcimilies of the local people.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: "The local people" means all of them, whether they are Gujars or Muslims or Sikhs. If you want a further explanation, I wili give it. i hope you will be satisfied. "The local people" includes Brahmins, Pandits. Okay?

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: That was not required.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: What arrangement did we make? You can make a guess about the number of yat*ris* who have gone for the *yatra* this year, but you cannot actually get the accurate figure. Last year there were only 70,000 persons. The year before last only 40,000 persons went there. For the consideration of the hon. House, through you, Madam, I want to reiterate what action we took. Twelve hundred tents each at Chandanwari, Seshnag and Panchtami were erected this time. What was done last year? They were just 900. The year before last only 750 tents were erected. This time 3,600 tents were erected. I further want to say that three concrete sheds each were constructed at Sheshnag and Panchtarni. Eighteen thousand to twenty thousand pilgrims could be accommodated. We have made these arrangements to the best of our ability. "We" includes the State Government. It does not mean only the Central Government. The State Government has also taken interest in it. I do not say that it has not done anything. Please, for God's sake, do not draw that conclusion. One of the seniormost officers, Lt. Gen. Saklani, Advisor in charge of Home and Tourism, was looking after these things because there is Governor's rule.

The Government of J&K is the overall in charge of the Amarnath Yatra. He had been closely supervising the initial arrangements for the Yatra as well as the relief measures. He made a numbr of trips in this connection. This is the one point that I would like to again reiterate. It is not that nothing has been done. That is not the actual issue before all of us. The State Government has taken certain steps and there is no question of any shortage of estables. At Pahalgam, the lowest point, about 60,000 to 70,000 people were stranded, because the roads were not fit for the Yatris. There was shortage of dal and edible oil at that point. That is the information I got from the authorities. Yesterday the Home Minister and I took the decision that at any cost they must reach the next day morning by whatever mode of transport ihat is possible. And it was supplied. There is no question of shortage of wheat or sugar or atta. So, there is no question of any shortage of food articles. We have made arrangements for 24 tonnes of rice, seven tonnes of sugar and eight tonnes of wheat atta. All these arrangements were made.

I think your point is very pertinent. Of course, our weather forecasting system is not up-to-date. I do agree with you that there was some kind of a lapse on that side. I will give the date, because I do not want to suppress anything from the House. Is there any need to suppress? What for should I suppress?

SHRI AJIT PK. JOG!: But, why were the Governor and the Chief Secretary camping here for three days?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Jogi, please do not interrupt. The Prime Minister is speaking.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: I will answer, that. You have got the right to ask questions. I do not say you should give a certificate for every omission and commission to whoever runs the Government. On that day I was in Madras and he might have been in Calcutta. Nobody...

SHRI AJIT P.K. JOGI: What about the Governor and the Chief Secretary?

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: I am coming to the point. The Governor came here for the Planning Commission meeting. In fact, I contacted the Governor. I will tell you when the Home Minister had taken steps. I will give you the information. Madam Chairperson, with your kind permission I would like to reiterate it, because I have to convince the people of this country and in this House, because there is no lapse on our part. The Prime Minister may be anywhere in the country, but he does get the information. Whether it is the Prime Minister or the Home Minister or the Governor, we have some machinery and we get the information. In such a situation, whether it is the Prime

Minister or the Home Minister or the Governor, we immediately took all necessary measures for rescue operations. I will just come to what actually happened on the 21st night. You referred to MIG or the helicopter. ....*(Interruptions)*.... Please cooperate. We had not kept quiet. The Tourism Department has published this pamphelt elaborating the do's don'ts for the Yatris to Amarnath.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: That is not the point. We know all these things. The simple point is you have said that you have made all arrangements. Now, in his Statement, the Home Minister has said that the communications system had collapsed. What did you do? Did you use the para-military forces in such a situation? Don't show all these things to me.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ahluwalia, if you are most concerned about it.. ..*(Interruptions)*....

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: I have read that. You also read it. Perhaps your translation is wrong. It is not my fault.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ahluwalia, don't disturb the proceedings of the House....*(Interruptions)*....I would not allow any cross-talk. We should have some dignity in the House Everybody is talking about dignity in the House and they themselves are flouting it.... *(Interruptions)*....Mr. Ahluwalia, let the Prime Minister speak. When the Prime Minister is replying to your quries, it is the dignity of the House to allow him to speak.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: I agree with you. But what is the purpose of mentioning do's and don'ts which were circulated some three months back? What has happened on the ground reality? There was no terrorist activity *(Interruptions)*....

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am not allowing you. Nothing is going on record....*(Interruptions)*....Nothing is going on record.....*(Interruptions)*....*Please* allow him; otherwise I have to take some action....*(Interruptions)*....We have been discussing this matter for more than two hours.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: Madam, these things cannot be discussed emotionally. It is a national tragedy. We must sympathise with the bereaved families.

Madam, I would like to put one question. Last month fifty-nine people died when they had gone on a *yatra* to Ujjain and Haridwar, the Parliament was in session ....*(Interruptions)*....

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: We raised this issue. You go through the record.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: I will allow you. Even on that day, I allowed you.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: You go through the record ... *(Interruptions)*....You go through the record.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ahluwalia, I am not allowing you. Please sit down ....*(Interruptions)*....

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: I know that....*(Interruptions)*....If I am able to defend myself, I will defend it. I don't need the... .*(Interruptions)*....

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: I can also defend myself.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: It doesn't matter. I am not worried about that also.....*(Interruptions)*....Don't have that impression.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ahluwalia, please keep quiet. Don't object to.. ..*(Interruptions)*....

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: In my life time, I am not aware of these things ....*(Interruptions)*....

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Madam .... *(Interruptions)*....

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I ask you to keep quiet. I won't permit you ....*(Interruptions)*.... I am not permitting you. You should understand when I am not permitting you, I will not permit you.... *(Interruptions)*....*I* am not permitting you.... *(Interruptions)*...*I* am not permitting it.... *(Interruptions)*....*I* am not permitting it. Don't have a running commentary. There is a dignity in this house when the Prime Minister is speaking.... *(Interruptions)*. ...Please keep quiet. When the Prime Minister is on his legs, when he is answering the queries raised by Members, the dignity of the House is to listen to him. I am not allowing it. When I am in the Chair. I know how to direct.

SHRI H. D. DEVE GOWDA: If you want to sack the Governor, tell me. If you want to sack the Chief Secretary, tell me.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: I Don't want to sack anybody. I don't want the power to sack anybody. You must give a correct answer. That is all.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: I know how many tragedies have taken place in this country. I know how you have run the administration. .... *(Interruptions).* ...I am not afraid of these things. Don't think that this Government is going to be cowed down by these things. Let me answer, whatever was required we have done. We are aware of it.

Some Members in the other Hosue have made some remarks. I don't want to quote from the proceedings of the other House. They have made all kinds of sweeping remarks. I may tell you honestly that the Government is not sleeping. If the elections were not to be held in Jammu and Kashmir, if the elections were not to be held in Uttar Pradesh, I don't think they would have stooped so low to make such sweeping remarks.

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI: Madam, I think this is unfair *...(Interruptions)...*

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: It is not a political matter. This is wrong *...(Interruptions)...*

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: I will tell you how *...(Interruptions)...* We are also human beings.

श्री विष्णु कान्त शास्त्री (उत्तर प्रदेश): आप चुनाव में फायदा लेना चाह रहे हैं ...(व्यवधान) मैं प्रधान मंत्री को आगाह करना चाहता हूं ...(व्यवधान) आप चुनाव का फायदा लेना चाह रहे हैं।

श्री त्रिलोकी नाथ चतुर्वेदी: आप गवर्नर का इस्तेमाल कर रहे है ...(*व्यवधान*) आप हमें भाषण देते है ... (व्यवधान)... दुनिया में और भी बहुत हैं जिन्होंने सब कुछ देखा है ...(व्यवधान)

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: It is not an election propaganda. *...(Interruptions)...*

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: I am fully convinced.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: But this is a wrong statement. You are saying that you are a sober person. What is this?

श्री त्रिलोकी नाथ चतुर्वेदी: हम ने सब कुछ सहा है

श्री विष्णु कान्त शास्त्री: इस में चुनाव की बात कः से आ गयी?

श्री त्रिलोकी नाथ चतुर्वेदी: हम ने भी बहुत कुछ सः है ...(व्यवधान)... इस देश की आत्मा को चोट पहुंच है।

श्री सुरेश पचौरी: अमरनाथ यात्रा की त्रासदी से चुना का क्या संबंध है ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री त्रिलोकी नाथ चतुर्वेदी: देश की आत्मा को चं पहुंची है।

श्री एस॰एस॰ अहलुवालिया: आप असत्य कह रहे इस तरह से कि यह नेशनल ट्रेजेडी है। ...(व्यवधान).

श्री त्रिलोकी नाथ चतुर्वेदी: आप की तरफ के, अ के सपोर्टर ने कहा सब से पहले ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री एस॰एस॰ अहलुवालिया: न यह चुनाव का मैद है और न किसी ने चुनावी मुद्दा उठाया है।

श्री त्रिलोकी नाथ चतुर्वेदी: आप को भी शालीन दिखानी पड़ेगी ...(व्यवधान)...

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: It should be expunged from the record. It is an uncharitable remark. *(Interruptions).*

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: I have appointed some Ministers only for denials.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: So what? You cannot pass any uncharitable remarks against Members of Parliament.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: I know that. There is nothing new for me to learn. *(Interruptions).* I have created a new portfolio only for denials.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: You may create. I do not care for that. You must not, you should not, pass any uncharitable remark *...(Interruptions).* It should be expunged, Madam.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let him make his points. *(Interruptions).*

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Madam, it is unfair. It is a matter of personal tragedy that we are raising.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please sit down. I have been telling you, if you are serious ...*(Interruptions).*

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: I am going to give all particulars. *(Interruptions).*

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: All of you, please sit down.

SHRI V. NARAYANASWAMY: Madam, it is unfortunate. I request the Prime Minister to kindly reply to the points raised.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: One second, Mr. Prime Minister.

The whole country is concerned with the tragedy. It is unfortunate that while we are having such a serious discussion for the last almost two and a half hours, at the fag end of the day, there should be some kind of unpleasantness in the House. We should also think of the people who are still stranded over there. We should also think that everyone in this House should give his support, whatever we can in whichever way, to see that the people who are stranded are helped. Whatever other political issues are there can be taken up later on, but not at this time. I request everybody and I tell everybody very strictly, there should be no interruption. *(Interruptions).* Mr. Ahluwalia, you are even interrupting me. I am so sorry to tell you this. You have no control over your voice. Please do something about it and keep quiet and let the Prime Minister answer the questions you have put I have noticed. He never interrupted anybody. Allegations were made, questions were put. He listened to everyone. Let him answer now. There is a limit for interruptions also.

SHRI VISHNU KANT SHASTRI: But he should also not mention about the elections

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: After my ruling nothing, please. Let him answer. Let me at least know what is happening. Even if you are not interested, I am interested to know what is happening to those 70,000 people over there. I am not interested in politics.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: It was an uncharitable remark.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I will look at the record. Whether it is charitable or uncharitable, I will decide later. Let me first find out. Now, please sit down. Take your seat. *(Interruptions).* Mr. Prime Minister, you please let us know what is happening there.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: I am not mentioning ...*(Interruptions).* Please hear me.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: I am not concerned about personal ...*(Interruptions).* I am concerned about the House. One should not pass this type of a remark.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please sit down. *(Interruptions).*

SHRI VISHNU KANT SHASTRI: He has hurt our feelings,

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am not allowing anything else now. I will look at .*he* record. If there is anything, I would see to it. ;' am now allowing the Finace Minister to make his points and answer the questions which have been put in the House. At least I am interested to know what is happening.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: Madam, if you permit me, I will proceed further.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes, please.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: On 16th of August about 25,000 pilgrims left Jammu for ...*(Interruptions).*

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please, Mr. Railway Minister, no interruption in the House.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: On 16th itself the pilgrims started moving from Jammu and I want to make this point clear that by 21st more than 1 2 lakh pilgrims left Jammu to Amarnath: On 21st night this problem started. All of a sudden, there was a heavy rainfall, snow, etc. and it continued on 22nd, 23rd and 24th. Some hon. Member asked when the Home Ministry started acting.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: Sir, I was there on the 22nd.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: That is what I am saying on 22nd when we got this

information, a separate control room was opened in the Home Ministry's office and every three hours we used to get the information. It is not to create any artificial record for the purpose of convincing the House, but every three hours we used to get the information. But till 24th evening, it was practically impossible to take any helicopter to that particular point. I am not an expert, but when the army people say, when the defence people say, when the military people say that it cannot be taken, I have only to go by their advice ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: I asked a simple question.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Can you now keep quiet? ...*(Interruptions)*... Please keep quiet. You have asked a question: we know that it is registered: please keep quiet. ...*(Interruptions)*... You do not comply with the Chair's instructions. I will have to name you, Mr. Ahluwalia.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: I can go.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You are most welcome if you want to go.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: I request you, Mr. Ahluwalia, that you should not go. At least I will be enlightened. ...*(Interruptions)*... I will be enlightened. If you go, there will be no charm. You should not go.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Sir, you always need a critic near you. ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No. But this is destroying a serious discussion because I think it is a very serious discussion where thousands of people are involved and everybody is saying that they are concerned. I do not think this is the way to discuss. You should listen to the Prime Minister and if you feel that there is still something which could be done, you can suggest it, but this cross-talk is not proper.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: Police, civil officers, all types of officers have been deployed. There is no question of deploying merely civil employees or only the Army. Police officers, security forces, armed forces—all these people started operating from 24th evening. Till then, it was practically impossible. On 23rd, 52,500 pilgrims were stranded; 27,000 at Panchatarani 11,000 at Seshnag and 14,500 at Chandanwari. Only on 24th we started operating. By the 25th evening, there was a slight improvement in the weather conditions. That was the day before yesterday; yesterday the House commenced. On 25th what was the position? At Panchatarani there remained just 150 yatris out of 27,000 people. We have brought down all other people. Only 150 remained there; that was done within 24 hours. Out of 11,000,100 people remained at Seshnag; out of 14,500, 8,000 people remained at Chandanwari. All the other people were brought down. When our hon. Home Minister went to Khanabal, about 60,000 to 65,000 people were there. He was unable to meet all the 65,000 to 70,000 people because of roadblocks. We will make all arrangements. So far as this is concerned, there is no question of any indifferent attitude. This is a sad state of affairs. Unfortunately, God is unkind towards us. We have done our best. That is all I want to say On 24;h evening there was some improvement in the weather conditions. We were working on 25th. We were working on 26th. Today special flight arrangements have been made to bring them from Jammu and Srinagar. Yesterday seven special trains, apart from the usual trains, were running. There is no question of allowing the people to suffer. We have opened more camps in Jammu for those people who come there and we have made all arrangements. The Director of Tourism has been placed in charge of supervision. Only seventy-three bodies have been identified. It was published in the local newspapers. Their relatives who accompanied them gave their consent to bury the dead bodies there itself. With the consent of their relatives the State authorities have taken a decision to bury their bodies because they are going to be decomposed. That problem is there. We have given all this conformation through the local media and it has been advertised. This is one thing which I would like to tell you. If any person wants to take the dead body or if any person wants to see the dead body, it is going to be sent to his native place. It is a question of time. It will take five or six days. But it is very difficult to preserve the bodies in such a condition. They will be decomposed and you all know what will happen then.

Some hon. Members, particulrly an elder lady Member, mentioned about the actual problem faced on the way to Amarnath. What is the actual situation? Even two people cannot move. That is the situation. There are terrains and other things. Steep hills are there. I have not gone there. In fact, I was also thinking of going there. Unfortunately, I could not go there. I was also equally anxious to visit that place. Unfortunately this time I could not do that. It may be the will of Lord Shiva, Lord Amarnath, that I should not see his *"Chhari"*. It may be the will of God.

As regards the suggestions made by the hon. Members, I will go through them and see whether any improvement can be made. The Government will seriously consider whatever suggestions that you have made.

I have announced a compensation of Rs. 50,000. The State Government is going to give Rs. 50,000.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Why is it only Rs. 50,000? We give a compensation of Rs. 2 lakhs to the victims of political riots. Why don't we pay a compensation of Rs. 2 lakhs to these victims, these pilgrims?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ahluwalia, please sit down. (*Interruptions)*... Please sit down. Never mind. There are many political questions. *{Interruptions)*...

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA:*

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Nothing is going on record. *{Interruptions)*... What Mr. Ahluwalia is saying is not going on record. *{Interruptions)*... Nothing is going on record. I am not allowing you.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOUDA: If the House wants to increase the compensation, I am prepared to increase the compensation and to see that it is done to your satisfaction.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: It is not to my satisfaction.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOUDA: Don't take it seriously. *{Interruptions)*... Don't take it seriously. For the first time there is such a demand. When fifty-nine people died in the last *Not recorded.

yatra no such suggestion had come. This demand has come for the first time. This time i am going to increase it. I make it Rs. 2 lakhs. Okay.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Thank you.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: So far as inquiry part is concerned, if there is any laps, we are also equally anxious. That is the only point for me to make an announcement here. The other House has taken a decision in the Business Advisory Committee to have a discussion on this issue the day after tomorrow because tomorow is a holiday. So to prevent any further discussion by that House—they may try to attribute motives; that is why I am a little bit worried ...*(Interruptions).* They have taken a decision for discussion on this issue. The Speaker has allowed a discussion on the 29th under Rule 193. The Government is going to come out. So far as inquiry is concerned. I am not going to spare anybody if there is any lapse. I can assure you this much. The inquiry is going to be held only after the discussion is over in Lok Sabha. I think I have tried to cover all the points mentioned by the hon. Members.

SHRI SURINDER KUMAR SINGLA: What about a national policy?

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: I have said that we would consider it.

SHRI VISHNU KANT SHASTRI: When was the Army pressed into service? When was the Army asked to do this work? *{Interruptions).*

SHRI S.M. KRISHNA (Karnataka): Madam, the hon. Prime Minister has made a pertinent point about weather condition forecasts at a time when such yatras take place. We do not have the kind of equipments that other Western or forward countries are having. *{Interruptions).* That we have, but it is not enough. Can we forecast what will be the ■ weather conditions after 8 days or 10 days or 15 days? Do we have that kind of equipment. If we have it, then why was it not used? Why was it not pressed into service? If it is so, then it is a very serious lapse. Without encroaching upon our sovereign rights I would like the Prime Minister to apply his mind. There should be some coordination with other Western countries about weather condition forecasts at such

jmes when yatras take place. With their id with their assistance and with some dination such calamities could be possibly . voided.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Mr. Prime Minister, I would like to know one thing.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I don't think I am giving you the permission. *(Interruptions).*

I am not going to allow anybody. Everybody had his say. The Prime Minister has answered. *(Interruptions).* I am not allowing. *(Interruptions).* Nothing is going on record. I am adjouring the House till 11 o'clock the day after tomorow.

The House then adjourned at thirty-nine minutes past seven of the clock till eleven of the clock on Thursday, the 29th August, 1996.